



THE BUFFALO BILL STORIES

A WEEKLY PUBLICATION
DEVOTED TO BORDER HISTORY

Issued Weekly. By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered as Second Class Matter at New York Post Office by STREET & SMITH, 238 William St., N. Y.

No. 27.

Price, Five Cents.



"I'VE TAKEN BIG ODDS AGAINST DEATH BEFORE. I'LL DO IT AGAIN!" CRIED BUFFALO BILL AS HE DASHED OUT OF THE CABIN INTO THE MIDST OF HIS STARTLED FOES.—(CHAPTER XCVI.)



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BUFFALO BILL'S VICTORIES.

By the author of "BUFFALO BILL."

CHAPTER XCV.

BUFFALO BILL ENTRAPPED.

The great and invincible army scout, Buffalo Bill, was riding leisurely along a rough mountain trail on the far frontier.

If he was dreading danger, his calm face did not reveal the fact, though no one knew better than he that he was in an enemy's country—a double enemy, in fact, for there were both hostile Indians and as equally merciless outlaws to dread, the latter under the leadership of a sworn and cruel foe of Buffalo Bill—a man who would have given all but life to capture the army scout with a career none had equaled.

Buffalo Bill was riding near a cañon that cut deep into the mountain, and his destination was a lone cabin he knew of hidden in the recesses of the range, for there he intended to pass the night, having done so before in his scouting trips alone.

Suddenly, and certainly as a surprise to him, Buf-

falo Bill was brought to a full realization of his deadly danger by a stern voice shouting from a hiding-place near:

"Come, men, we have him now! Spread out so as to surround him, for a deep cañon cuts off his flight in the rear."

Seeing that they had but one to deal with, and determined to capture the daring scout, the men pushed on with rapid flight, spreading out in a long line, so as to drive their game toward a deep gulch nearly a mile in length.

Knowing that the gulch was from twenty to forty feet in width, possessed steep, precipitous sides, and was exceedingly deep, the outlaws felt confident that the death hour of Buffalo Bill had come, and an exultant smile shone on the face of Solaris, the leader of the band, for they had seen the scout coming far off on the trail and had gone into ambush for him.

Calmly the scout sat and gazed upon his coming foes, his eyes narrowly watching the lengthening line, and then, though the chief was much nearer him

than any of his band, he quickly raised his repeating rifle, its sharp crack was heard, and an outlaw upon the right of Solaris toppled over.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the scout, as if reveling in his deadly revenge; and then, with a quick cry to his horse, the noble stallion bounded away, with the speed of a rocket.

"It is the Prairie Whirlwind!"

"He rides the Mustang Stallion! the king of the wild drove!"

"He has caught the Wind Beater!" yelled the different voices of Indian and paleface, for they now recognized the famous king of the mustangs, for by the above titles the wild equine rover that Buffalo Bill rode, and had but lately captured on the prairies, was known along the frontier.

"A thousand dollars to the man who will capture yonder horse for me!"

"A thousand more for the man who takes his rider alive!" yelled Solaris, almost beside himself with rage and excitement, for to own the Prairie Whirlwind had been his greatest ambition, and, though his entire band had spent weeks in the endeavor to capture him, the wild, fleet and matchless prairie ranger had been too much for them.

Then, to have in his power Buffalo Bill, Solaris, the outlaw chief, felt that he would give ten years of his life.

Madly he gored with cruel spurs the splendid steed he rode, whose match he had never met, except in the Prairie Whirlwind, and, with a snort of pain and terror, the noble animal bounded forward, and seemed as if gaining on his famous rival.

Then Buffalo Bill was seen to slowly draw rein as he approached the cañon, and suddenly came to a halt upon the yawning edge, as if bewildered by the new and terrible danger that confronted him.

Seeing his hesitation, and believing him now an easy prey, a wild yell of joy burst from the long line of outlaws.

Glancing up and down the cañon and then observing it was impossible to dash by either end of the outlaw line ere they could reach him, the scout

slowly trotted for fifty lengths down the side of the gulch, and, quickly turning his horse, galloped back toward his enemies.

What! was he going to surrender?

No! He came on too rapidly, as though his intention was to break through the armed line.

Such were the thoughts of Solaris and his men, and their faces lit up with smiles of triumph as they unfastened their long lassoes, and headed for a common center.

"God in Heaven! look there!"

It was the deep, ringing voice of Solaris that gave utterance to the sudden expression, and as he uttered it he reined his straining steed back upon his haunches, and held him there with an iron hand.

Every man of that band followed their leader's example, and two-score horsemen sat breathless in their saddles, their eyes staring before them, and their horses held on their haunches by the cruel curb.

The sight that had so terrified them was a desperate one, indeed, for when the scout had arrived within fifty yards of Solaris, he quickly drew the Prairie Whirlwind back with masterly skill, and, bursting forth in his mocking laughter, with a sharp cry to his steed, wheeled, as though on a pivot, and dashed away with lightning speed, directly for the cañon.

It was evident that the rider now fully realized his danger, for he was seen to settle himself firmly in his saddle and seize his reins with a firmer hand, while his rifle was again slung at his back.

With tremendous bounds the Prairie Whirlwind went at the work before him, his eyes wildly glaring, his blood-red nostrils expanded, and every muscle gathering for the mighty leap, for that Buffalo Bill had determined upon his course was evident, and in silent horror even that outlaw band awaited.

On, on, on, bounded the Prairie Whirlwind.

Nearer and nearer grew that terrible chasm, and then the spurs sought the glossy flanks of the black, the reins were tightened slowly, and, with a loud cry, the scout rushed him at the mighty leap.

Like a huge, black ball the noble animal sprang

high into the air, shooting forward with tremendous velocity at the same time, and then his hoofs rang upon the hard footing on the other side.

The leap had been taken successfully.

With one accord that band of desperate outlaws, headed by Chief Solaris, gave a loud yell of admiration at the desperate feat, and the ringing laugh of Buffalo Bill was borne to their ears as he sped on, to soon disappear in the gloom of the approaching darkness.

In silence Solaris turned back toward the motte, and soon around a blazing campfire the scout was talked of with a gathering feeling of superstitious dread.

Later, Chief Solaris called his lieutenant to him and said:

"Have the men ready to move two hours before dawn, for he has not escaped me, as he thinks.

"I know where he will seek refuge for the night, as I noted the trail he took, and we will catch him there."

At the appointed hour, the outlaws were on the trail.

CHAPTER XCVI.

THE FIRE TRAP.

A grim smile rested upon the face of Buffalo Bill after the desperate chances he had taken to escape from his outlaw foes.

His splendid black stallion, only a short while before the king of a large herd of wild horses, yet captured by Buffalo Bill and completely mastered, seemed to feel proud of the magnificent leap he had made across the cañon.

"Another escape from death to my credit, Black Whirlwind, and which I owe to you; yes, never saw I your equal," muttered the scout, patting the neck of the animal affectionately.

Continuing to muse as he rode along, Buffalo Bill said:

"I shall still go to the cabin to camp, for those fellows only sent me a couple of miles off my trail.

"But I little suspected that Solaris and his cut-throat band were up in these parts.

"What can have brought them here, now?

"Ah! can they have heard of Colonel Fields' coming, and hope to capture him to hold for terms and ransom, knowing that he is rich?

"It may be so, and mighty glad am I that I came by this trail."

Night came on, but Buffalo Bill seemed at no loss to keep the trail, and, after an hour's ride, came to a cabin of logs hidden away under a cliff.

"I don't think Solaris will suspect I came up here, though he may do so; but this is the only place where I can find wood, water and grass, so I will risk it, and we'll leave early," and the scout dismounted, opened the cabin, lighted a fire with dry grass and wood on hand, and then unsaddled his horse, washed him at the rivulet near and staked him out where the grass was plentiful.

Re-entering the cabin he cooked his supper and later enjoyed his pipe for an hour or more, after which he went after Black Whirlwind. Leading him into the cabin, the scout made him a bed of the dry grass, placed a pile of it near for him to feed upon, and then, spreading his blanket-bed, sought rest for himself.

It was just dawn when he awoke, and, as cautious as an Indian, he peered out of a crack in the logs before he opened the door.

It was well that he did so, for his quick eye caught sight of an Indian, then of a white man, skulking along his trail.

They belonged to the band of Solaris, he well knew, but he said with strange calmness:

"They have tracked us here, Black Whirlwind.

"We did not get away soon enough. But I will keep quiet, and I guess I can pick off several of them as a starter."

He gave his horse more of the dried grass, then ate a cold snack himself, saddled and bridled Black Whirlwind, strapped on his traps, and then began a search for his foes.

As he did so, a stern voice called out:

"No, Buffalo Bill! We know that you are in there, for we trailed you here."

"I do not deny it. But what are you going to do about it?" coolly answered the scout.

"Surrender, and I will spare your life."

"Yes, just as an Indian would."

"You do not believe me?"

"You are a fool to propose surrender to me."

"I have offered you terms, you refuse them, and now I will show you no mercy."

"Just wait until I ask mercy of a wolf."

"I shall take you alive."

"Talk is cheap—set to work."

"I will burn you up in the cabin."

Buffalo Bill did not at once reply.

When he did it was with his rifle.

He could not see Solaris from where he stood when talking to him; but he did see in the thicket half-a-dozen outlaws, white men and Indians, grouped together, and in the line surrounding the cabin.

He aimed at the bunch through the crack between the logs of the cabin, and his rifle spoke once, twice, thrice!

There were yells of terror, cries of pain, groans, and all was silent; then a voice called out:

"He killed two of us, chief—a white and a red."

The man who spoke made the fatal mistake of considering himself hidden when he uttered the words—his last.

Another shot came from the deadly rifle in the cabin, followed by the words:

"Make it three, Solaris!"

A volley of shots were poured upon the cabin, and Buffalo Bill within uttered a cry, followed by a fall and groan.

"That got him! Rush the cabin, men!"

A dozen men ran to the door, and instantly rang out the deadly music of the scout's rifle.

Shouts of terror, curses, yells of pain followed, and mocking laughter broke from Buffalo Bill's lips.

He had taught the outlaws a severe lesson.

In a frenzy of rage Chief Solaris shouted:

"Bring wood and brush and set his den afire!"

Buffalo Bill heard this merciless order with concern.

He was at bay successfully from the fire of weapons and the attempts of the outlaws to take the cabin; but to set it on fire meant a death struggle and quickly, without any shelter.

But he did not despair, and muttered:

"We have got to face the music, Black Whirlwind, and the chances are big against us."

The men obeyed the cruel order of their merciless leader only too readily, and wood and brush were dragged and piled up against the cabin.

But a shot from within brought down an Indian, and another broke the hand of a white man, causing all to rush to cover, and then to work again with the greatest caution.

When all was ready to apply the match Solaris, from his hiding-place in the rear of the cabin, called out:

"Will you surrender now, Buffalo Bill?"

"No—I am all right."

"I shall burn you out."

"All right; others have been burned to death before me."

"I will spare your life if you will give me that horse you have, your outfit and take your oath to keep off my trail."

"I make no terms with cut-throats, Solaris."

The scout heard the curse the outlaw leader uttered, and then followed the harsh order:

"Set the den on fire!"

A yell from the band told how happy this order made them, and Buffalo Bill heard the scratching of matches.

"Whirlwind, I guess we'll have to try our luck against lead and shot, rather than fire.

"They are a quicker death; but don't say die until death gets its grip on you."

So saying, Buffalo Bill noiselessly unbarred the door, tied a rope to it, and with the other end in his hand mounted his horse.

He settled himself well in the saddle, a revolver

in each hand, his rifle slung at his back ready for use and waited.

The brush about the cabin began to crackle as the flames gathered headway, and the logs took fire.

"Now, Black Whirlwind!"

With the words Buffalo Bill dragged hard on the rope he held in hand, and the door was drawn wide open.

There was not an outlaw who observed the door open, shielded by the smoke, as it was.

"I've taken big odds against death before—I'll do it again," cried Buffalo Bill, as he darted out of the cabin into the midst of the fiendish band, his revolvers ringing out death-knells upon either side.

CHAPTER XCVII.

ON A TRAIL OF RESCUE.

So sudden was the coming of the daring scout into their midst that the few outlaws in front of the cabin were completely dumfounded.

They had expected an appeal for mercy, an offer to surrender to them, when the fire began to get too close, but not once had a suspicion been held of an attempt to escape from the burning cabin.

It was madness to think of such a desperate thing, they considered.

Into their midst was Buffalo Bill, his revolvers ringing before they saw him, and in their dumb amazement he gained a great advantage at the start.

Only a few rods away was a thicket, and beyond this a downhill trail through thick timber.

It was the intention of Buffalo Bill to break through the human line that faced him, reach the thicket, then the timber and thus escape.

The chances were in favor of his death, the killing of his horse, and a struggle to end then and there.

But the very boldness and desperation of his act favored him.

His deed surprised the outlaws, so that their resistance was prevented.

His deadly aim fell upon those whom his searching, eagle eyes saw about to resist his way.

Their fall before his revolvers demoralized the others, and in the space of a quarter of a minute he had bounded through what had seemed desperate odds, and, without a wound for himself and horse, had gained the shelter of the thicket.

Another instant and he was upon the trail leading into the heavy timber, and, firing behind him with his rifle as he ran, he thus kept his foes at a disadvantage.

He heard the yells, oaths, stern orders of the outlaw chief and laughed derisively.

Upon the back of Black Whirlwind, so well used to leading his herd of wild mustangs over rough ground and through dangers, he knew that he had nothing to fear save from a chance shot at him as he fled.

Suddenly he uttered a cry of triumph, for there, in an open space before him, were the horses of the band.

One man was guarding them, and Buffalo Bill was upon him, riding him down, before he knew the scout was not one of the band who was coming.

Over the outlaw guard went the splendid black, and, seeing that he did not rise, Buffalo Bill would not fire upon him, but, disarming him, he drew his knife, and, riding along the lines of hitched horses, pack animals and all, he cut each rope and set them free.

With shots and yells then he stampeded the entire outfit, starting them off in a race down the mountain trail.

It was a very clever act on the part of the fugitive scout to set the horses of the outlaws astray through the timber, and he kept them at a run for a couple of miles, until they scattered in small droves and separated upon reaching the foothills.

The scout could not refrain from laughing at the useless shots and fierce profanity sent after him by the enraged outlaws, who were thus left dismounted and with no chance of capturing Buffalo Bill, or, in

fact, their horses, without a long and hard tramp, that must take them all day.

"Well, that was my good luck, and as narrow an escape as I ever had.

"It does seem that I bear a charmed life, as so many really believe, or those fellows were too badly scared to drop me.

"Now, to strike across the range for the trail that Colonel Field must be on, and with the band of Solaris afoot and up in this country, there will be either no fear, unless the outlaw chief divides his force and guards the mountain trails to ambush the colonel—ah! I shall rope that fellow in," and Buffalo Bill looked behind him at the sound of hoof-falls, and saw a splendid-looking horse, snow white and equipped with handsome saddle and bridle, coming after him at a rapid gallop.

As the horse came nearer, riderless and seemingly anxious to overtake him, Buffalo Bill unslung his lariat from his saddle horn and prepared to lasso him.

But the splendid white showed no fear, no sign of dashing by, and, slackening his pace as he drew near, gave a neigh as a greeting and trotted alongside.

"It is the horse that Chief Solaris rode, and a superb creature.

"To lose him will break the heart of that red-handed devil, if heart he has," and the scout leaned from his saddle and greeted the stray animal affectionately, while he noted his fine bridle, saddle and equipments, for he carried a roll of blankets, a leather pouch, holster pistols and a haversack.

"You are too good a beast to have served such a brute master," said the scout, after a look over the horse and his outfit, and again mounting, he rode on his way through the foothills.

"If the traps on this white beauty did not prove his master to be Solaris, I would think the splendid creature must be the horse known as the Ghost steed, often reported to have been seen in these mountains, and with a woman spook as a rider.

"He would look like a phantom steed in the

night, and, as I do not know what name his outlaw master gave him, I shall call him Ghost," and the scout seemed much pleased with his capture of the magnificent animal, while the latter was apparently perfectly satisfied with his newly-found friends.

The scout rode on with the air of a man who had an aim in view, a duty to perform, and meant to do it, be the obstacles in the way what they might.

No one knew better than he the dangerous country he was in, and that if he avoided seeing the band of outlaws again he was more than likely to come upon hostile Indians.

One thing troubled him, and that was the finding of Solaris and his band of outlaws up in that country at that time, for their being there indicated that they knew of the coming through to his new post of command of Colonel Warren Field, and that the commander of the frontier district had a small escort Buffalo Bill was assured.

If Solaris had not all of his outlaw force with him it was sure that one of his lieutenants would have the balance on the trails on the watch for the colonel, for the capture of the officer meant much to him, and the chief never did anything half-way in his plots for evil.

As he reached a valley in the top of the mountain range Buffalo Bill halted suddenly:

What other eyes might have missed his saw distinctly.

He saw a fresh trail leading along across his track and through the valley.

The scout dismounted and examined the trail closely.

"Made by shod horses, and that means they are not Indians.

"Yes, either the colonel and his party, or—outlaws left this trail.

"But can Colonel Field have been so rash as to have only an escort of half-a-dozen soldiers, for, as near as I can make out, there were but seven horses passed along here.

"I wonder who can have been his guide to bring him up here, if it is the colonel, when his trail

should have led along the base of the hills beyond?

"Well, I must push after this party and find out just who left this trail."

So saying, Buffalo Bill took more particular note of the hooftracks, then mounted and rode on along the trail he had so unexpectedly found there in the mountains.

That he was anxious, there was no doubt.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

THE PHANTOM OF THE STORM.

"I give it up—we are lost!"

"Oh, no; do not say that, for to be lost in this wild land means death."

The first speaker was a young man wearing the uniform of a lieutenant of the cavalry service of the United States army.

The one who answered his despondent words half-pleadingly, half-disparagingly, was a young girl, beautiful in face, faultless in form.

There were five persons comprising the party, all well mounted, but with horses showing hard riding.

One of the party was a handsome man of middle age, dressed in a fatigue uniform and wearing the shoulder-straps of a colonel of cavalry.

Then there were two soldiers, a sergeant and a corporal, the latter leading two pack animals.

"Pardon me, Miss Field, but I spoke aloud without thought, in fact, never would have done so, did I believe you could have heard me," said the lieutenant, greatly fretted at having said what he did to alarm the young girl.

"Yet you have said it—that you are lost, Lieutenant Nugent," anxiously responded the girl.

"I cannot deny the fact, but I will yet find the trail, never fear," he responded, hopefully; but he cast a foreboding look at the clouds, which threatened a storm, and that meant a blizzard in the early spring in those mountains.

"Do your best, Nugent, and you will have done your duty, for you did not care to take the risk of

guiding us, having been but once over this trail, which our flight from those redskins drove us away from—you are not to blame," said Colonel Field, calmly.

"I think the fort lies in that direction, sir, or near about, and I shall hold on as we are," said the young officer.

"Ah! here comes the snow," and flakes began to fall as the colonel spoke.

After a moment of hesitation, as though to be sure of his course, the lieutenant moved on once more, the colonel and his daughter following, the two soldiers and pack animals close behind them.

As they rode on the snow began to fall faster and faster, and shut in the view, the wind rose and howled dismally through the pines, and the scene was dreary and discouraging in the extreme.

Worse and worse grew the storm, and all wrapped their storm-coats about them and went on in silence.

It was a cruel day and ride for men, especially for a young girl, who had begun to feel the full terror of the situation, with no help near.

But on led the brave young officer, though all trails were blotted out by the snow; but he was striving to reach the heavy pine timber, where shelter could be found and a camp made.

Darkness fell at last upon a plain of unbroken white which surrounded the brave fighters for life, as they struggled on.

The horses, with low-bent heads, began to feel the strain, as with night the cold and snow increased in severity, and the colonel called out:

"Ho! Nugent, we must seek shelter of some kind!"

"We will form a camp here, sir, among these rocks," said the young officer, cheerily.

"It is best, for there are a few scrub pines here, and we can find a little wood."

Despair was at the heart of Lieutenant Nugent; but not for himself; he felt for the brave girl whose pluck would not yield to their desperate situation, as she called out:

"We will make the best of it, and if death comes meet it without fear."

They halted there in that bleak, snow-covered plain, and from the lips of all came a cry.

Was it an image of their thoughts that they saw?

The lieutenant feared so at first; so did the others.

But, no, for all saw it, and it was not a phantom of the imagination.

But phantom it looked—a phantom horse and rider, for the animal was snow white, and the one on his back appeared to be enveloped in a shroud.

The seeming ghostly apparition was coming toward them.

The one coming toward them was certainly following on their trail through the snow.

Suddenly the trailer halted some distance away, and clear-cut and stern came a hail:

"Ho, there! Are you friends or foes?"

Nugent's firm voice answered:

"Bravo, Buffalo Bill! I would know your voice in a thousand!

"I am Lieutenant Nugent, and Colonel Field and his daughter are with me."

The two soldiers broke out in a cheer, while Colonel Field asked:

"Is it the army scout, Buffalo Bill, Nugent?"

"Yes, sir, and it means rescue for us."

"I can hardly believe mortal man can rescue us now," said Bertha Field, as Buffalo Bill rode up.

He shook the snow from his broad sombrero and saluted, quietly remarking:

"I am glad to have found you, Lieutenant Nugent, for this is a bad night and place to be caught in."

The young officer's heart was beating with joy, and, grasping the hand of the scout, he said with enthusiasm:

"God bless you, Cody, for you have saved us.

"Colonel Field, this is William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, the army scout, and the only man on earth who can save us from death this night."

The colonel rode forward, warmly grasped the hand of Buffalo Bill, and said:

"You are well known to me by your deeds and border name, Scout Cody, and I believe you can help us.

"My daughter, this is Scout Cody, who in some way has found us."

"I saw your trail, sir, and followed it," modestly said Buffalo Bill, as Ruth Field put forth her hand, and grasping his hand asked:

"And have you risked your life to follow and save us from what I now know was certain death?"

"I saw your trail in the mountain valley, and, feeling that it must be Colonel Field and his escort, and that you were lost, I followed; but come at once, for you must find shelter without delay," and the scout placed himself in the lead and, drawing his heavy storm-coat about him, moved away through the unbroken field of snow, the others following in single file.

"What a remarkable man—without a sign to guide him, and in this blinding snow-storm, he moves ahead in a way that gives confidence," said the colonel.

"Here is a trail, Cody," called out Lieutenant Nugent.

"Yes, your own. You were only moving around in a circle when I found you—you will cross it again and again yet," was the answer.

Buffalo Bill led the way unerringly across the plain to the hills, then through a valley toward a mountain range that loomed up ahead.

After a few miles had been gone over, and the valley had narrowed into a cañon, a light suddenly gleamed ahead of them, a radiant beacon of hope.

All eyes were strained on the light ahead, and from the lips of the lost party broke a sigh of relief, a prayer of thankfulness, followed by a blessing for the silent man ahead, who had saved them from death.

"It is a light from a cabin—come on, come on!" cried Lieutenant Nugent, and a cheer followed his words, as all spurred forward, and soon arrived at what was a stoutly-built cabin, built at the head of a

cañon, and in the midst of a pine thicket that afforded it good shelter.

Buffalo Bill called out:

"Ho, within there!"

But no answer came.

He called again and rapped loudly on the door.

Still no answer.

Slipping from his saddle, he found the door opened readily, and a bright fire of logs burned upon the wide hearth.

But no one was there. Self-preservation being the first law of nature, they waited no longer but at once took possession, and then it was that they discovered how nearly frozen they were.

But there on a rustic table was coffee, bacon, bread, and a quarter of venison hung up by the door.

Cooking utensils were upon the hearth, a wooden bucket full of fresh water was there and all seemed as though just prepared for them.

Wood was piled up in the corner, and the cabin had three rooms in it, the center one they had entered apparently the kitchen and eating room.

One of the soldiers soon discovered a shed in the rear of the cabin, and into this the horses were put, while there was an ample supply of hay in one end.

But whose home was it was the question asked Buffalo Bill, who answered quietly:

"It is the home of a strange man known as the Mad Miner.

"But make yourselves at home, for I will be responsible for him."

It took a long time to get thawed out, but the lieutenant made some coffee, and that greatly helped and after a while Ruth insisted upon getting supper, which she did for all, the colonel saying to the soldiers:

"There is no rank to-night, boys, so help yourselves."

In the two other rooms a lot of well-tanned bear, buffalo and other skins were found, and they were quickly pressed into use as beds, Ruth being made most comfortable in another room, where the lieutenant built a fire that made it more cheerful.

Quickly all turned in for the night, though expecting that the owner of the cabin must surely appear later.

But the night passed, day came and the storm was still raging, but the cabin's owner had not appeared.

With hay for their horses and food for themselves, they did not suffer, however, and the day had waned into afternoon, when suddenly a blow was heard upon the door, and, springing to it, Lieutenant Nugent beheld sticking there and still quivering with the force of its flight, an Indian arrow.

"Ah! a slip of paper is wrapped about the arrow-head, so no Indian fired this," cried the lieutenant, and quickly he unrolled the paper, glanced at lines written on it with a pencil and cried with more excitement than he was wont to show:

"Read this, Colonel Field, for we must leave this cabin at once."

CHAPTER XCIX.

ON THE OVERLAND TRAIL.

Colonel Warren Field was a man with a gallant reputation, and his experience as a commander upon the Mexican frontier was such that he had been picked out as the very one to command a military post on the Northwestern border, where the lawless element had to be driven out, and the hostile tribes of Indians needed to be dealt with severely.

He was a widower and Ruth was his only child. His earlier years had been passed in frontier forts, so when ordered to his new command, at her entreaty, he had decided to take her with him, she having just finished her school days in the East.

So it was that Colonel Field and Ruth started for Fort Defence, in Utah, knowing that they would have to face many hardships on the way.

The colonel had written to the major commanding the fort, as he was to bring money; and a valuable outfit along, he wished an officer and several soldiers as an escort to meet him on the Overland trail, for the road agents were to be dreaded, as they often held up the coaches.

Thus Lieutenant Edgar Nugent, a young soldier who several years before had gone from West Point, was sent with half-a-dozen men to take the coach and meet him and his daughter at a station beyond which westward the road agents were to be feared.

When met the party just filled the coach, and with the baggage of the colonel and Ruth it was a good load for the half-dozen horses over which Nick Dunn, the Overland stage driver, held the reins.

"It will be a bold band of road agents that will attempt to haul up this coach, with you and your escort, lieutenant," said Nick Dunn, as he started on the trail to the mining camp, where an ambulance and horses would be taken on to Fort Defence.

But the road agents at the Overland were bold men when gold and booty were at stake, and, in spite of the soldiers' escort, there suddenly rang out the loud command from a group of rocks upon the side of the trail:

"Halt that coach, Nick Dunn, or you are a dead man!"

Upon ordinary circumstances Nick Dunn would not have dared to refuse; but with a lieutenant and six cavalymen along he simply laid his whip upon his horses to dash by and shouted back:

"Not this time, you cut-throat thieves!"

But they were the last words he ever spoke, for a volley of rifle bullets were poured upon him, and he dropped back dead upon the top of the coach.

At the request of Colonel Field, his escort, save one soldier, had ridden in the coach with him, and, though the man on the box with Nick Dunn was wounded when the driver was shot dead, he grasped the reins and tried to dash on.

But other shots were fired, the brave soldier fell from the box, still hanging on to the reins, and the horses, thus swerved to one side, ran hard against a rock, smashing one wheel to atoms and bringing the wildly swaying coach to a sudden halt, amid the wild yells of half-a-dozen road agents that dashed into view, believing their victory won.

But already had Lieutenant Nugent seized his revolver, and, calling to his men to follow, he leaped

from the coach, just as it halted, and his deadly aim brought down the nearest of the outlaws.

The colonel and the soldiers had quickly followed the young officer, and the rapid rattle of carbines and revolvers made deadly music for a while.

But the road agents, surprised by the extra guard, had quickly taken flight, leaving several of their men dead upon the field.

They had sought gold, but got lead instead.

But the driver and two soldiers lay dead in the trail and the coach was a wreck, while not another was to be had within a hundred miles.

Truly had Ruth Field begun her life in the Wild West in a tragic and disheartening manner.

But the end was not yet.

Short, sharp and deadly had been the hold-up of Nick Dunn's coach.

But the victory was with the soldiers.

It was a victory, however, that had cost valuable lives, and the situation was anything but a happy one.

Examination showed that the coach was beyond repair, and it was a good long hundred miles to the mining camp, where relief could be found.

The fort was not so far, and could be reached by a trail across the range, where wheels could not go.

Once Lieutenant Nugent and one of the soldiers with him had gone that trail.

If alone now he would not hesitate to undertake it, but with Ruth Field along he did.

The weather looked threatening, the rations the soldiers had along would last but a couple of days and the situation was certainly critical.

The fort could certainly be reached before the mining camp, on horseback, and should they go to the latter they yet had a long ride of it to the post, and a dangerous one, for Indians might be encountered on that trail.

In either case the baggage could not be carried.

A consultation was held, and Colonel Field said:

"Both my daughter and myself have our saddles and bridles along, Nugent, while your own and your men's are on the top of the coach.

"These six horses are all good animals, and the horses of the dead outlaws we can use.

"We have wraps along in plenty, and I say start for the fort, for I know you are a good plainsman and can guide us there."

"And I say to the fort," said Ruth, adding, "I don't mind the hardships of the long ride."

"To the fort be it then, colonel; but remember I do not profess to be sure of the trail," answered the lieutenant. "We will risk it, for it is a risk anyway."

"Now to the baggage. We can hide it among the rocks, and cover it up so that it will be safe. It is the best we can do.

"But now to the dead. We will place them in the coach, sir, and my idea is to send two of the men on to the mining camp to report to the Overland agent what has occurred.

"There is a coach there, and he can send after the baggage and the dead, while my two men can await at the mining camp until a force goes from the fort after them and the baggage."

"Just the thing to be done, Lieutenant Nugent, and we'll lose no time," answered the colonel.

The wraps, overcoats and blankets were then gotten and packed on two of the horses, while the other animals were saddled and bridled for the long ride.

The baggage was hidden away among the rocks and covered with pine straw, the dead bodies put in the coach and two of the soldiers, mounting, started off upon the trail to the mining camp.

This done, the colonel and Ruth, and the lieutenant and his two men, with the pack animals in lead, made the start for the fort, the young officer leading the way.

On they pressed, the lieutenant keeping at a lively pace, for he was anxious to reach a camping-place he knew of for the night, in time to build for Ruth as good a shelter as possible, for the spring nights were cold and he feared that the long winter might break up with a blizzard, that it would be death to be caught out in.

When stationed at a fort in Texas, where he had

known Ruth Field, then in her sixteenth year, he had learned to love her, and now meeting her again four years after, he felt that she was the one woman in the world to him, and made up his mind to devote his life to winning her love in return.

The camping-place was reached, a sheltered cañon through which ran a clear stream, and with good grass for the horses, while pines were in plenty for wood.

A wicky-up, as the Indians call a bush arbor, was made for Ruth, to protect her from the cold, and after a good supper all retired save the soldier who was to stand guard, Lieutenant Nugent dividing the time with the men, so that each should have rest.

Bright and early the next morning they were on their way again, for the young officer was casting anxious looks at the gathering clouds.

Up to noon all had gone well; but just as they were leaving their camp where they had had dinner, a band of a score of Indians suddenly came dashing toward them, and at once it became a race for life.

The Indians had cut them off from the trail to the fort, but the lieutenant in their flight kept circling around to get back to it, and seeing this the braves pursued them the harder.

For seven hours the chase continued, the fugitives being driven farther and farther from the trail to the fort, and the Indians steadily gaining upon them, until all knew that they must soon stand at bay and fight.

CHAPTER C.

A RUNNING FIGHT.

"Colonel, you and Miss Field ride on with one soldier and the pack horse, while I halt with the other man and try and stand them off."

So said Edgar Nugent as he saw that the Indians were getting within range to fire.

"It is just what I knew you would wish, Lieutenant Nugent, but there must be no danger now that all of us do not share.

"We stand and fight together," sturdily said the

colonel, while Ruth added cheerfully: "Yes, indeed; just consider me one of the boys and don't count me in as a woman."

"Well said, my child. We are in this fight to stand together," and yet the colonel's brave words did not hide the look of intense anxiety he felt for his loved child.

"I have my repeating rifle, sir, so will fall in behind instead of lead, for we are on no trail now; in fact, I do not know my way," and he added the last words in a whisper to the colonel, who answered in the same low tone:

"Nor do I know even the direction of the fort trail, we have had to turn and twist in our flight so. But try your rifle, Nugent, and yet do not drop back too far, or we shall halt for you."

The young officer at once dropped back to the rear, just in time, for a shower of arrows fell almost in their midst.

Leaping from his horse to get better aim, he picked out the leader of the Indians and pulled the trigger.

Down went the chief's pony, but the rider, though falling heavily, was quickly upon his feet.

"I must do better than that.

"My hard ride has unsteadied my nerves," and once more he leveled his rifle just as Colonel Field shouted back to him to come on.

The rifle again flashed, and a warrior fell from the saddle dead.

In an instant the dismounted chief had leaped upon the riderless horse of the dead warrior, and on came the band once more at greater speed than ever.

"We have halted for you, Nugent," came in thunder tones from the colonel, while Ruth cried: "Come on or we will come back for you, sir!"

The words made the young officer's heart thrill with pleasure, and he waved his hat, leaped into the saddle, fired several shots rapidly at the coming redskins and rode after his party.

But his shots had not been thrown away, as an-

other pony went down and a brave was seen to have been hard hit.

But the Indians, feeling sure of their prey, again came on, and steadily began to gain once more, for their ponies were not tired as were the animals of those they pursued.

"We will cross that little valley, sir, and make a stand on yonder hill," said Lieutenant Nugent, and the colonel replied: "Yes, and there it must be a fight to the bitter end."

All knew what that meant, and the faces of each one was white and stern, but there was no fear there, Ruth showing the same undaunted courage as the men.

The valley was crossed, the hill gained, and they rode into a group of rocks and sprang from their horses, while yet the Indians were several hundred yards away.

Ruth grasped the reins of the horses, the colonel drew his revolvers. Edgar Nugent had his repeating rifle and the two soldiers had their carbines.

There they stood, at bay for the desperate fight, and determined upon death rather than capture.

The Indians were charging across the valley, now counted to be twenty-three in number, and seemed to be determined, cost what it might in losses, to make a desperate rush and settle the battle at close quarters.

They well knew that there was revenge to get, scalps to take, prizes to win.

"I will open, sir, when they reach the foot of the hill.

"You, men, keep your carbines for nearer work, and your revolvers for close quarters, as I will mine," said the young officer, and he rested his repeating rifle upon the rock before him, while he did not dare look at Ruth, who stood a few paces back of him, still holding the horses.

"We may beat them off, Nugent, but if not we can die, for surrender to redskins is worse than death," said Colonel Field, and as he uttered the words in a low tone to the lieutenant, he turned and called out: "Ruth, my child, you have your revolver?"

"Yes, father," was the rejoinder.

"If all is lost, use it."

"If those fiends reach us, father, I will send a bullet through my heart," was the brave reply of Ruth, and she held in her hand a revolver.

CHAPTER CI.

THE MAD HERMIT.

It was a moment fraught with deadliest danger, and when hope and despair hung in the balance.

There was no flinching from death, if death it must be, in the four men who stood there to meet the worst.

They had faced death often before, and, though pale and stern, they were yet ready to die in the discharge of duty.

For themselves they thought but little in comparison to what they felt for the brave girl they must protect.

They heard her words that told of her determination to take her own life, when all hope was gone.

They saw that it was no idle threat.

They knew that it was better so.

Lieutenant Nugent was bringing his repeating rifle to aim.

His eyes were glancing along the sights to pick the chief and the braves.

There must be no miss, he well knew; no shot thrown away.

When his rifle was empty the two soldiers must use their carbines.

When this was done all must use their revolvers.

If the Indians were not checked then there would be no one to tell the story among that little party.

The repeating rifle cracked after what seemed an age to those watching the lieutenant.

But his aim was true, and the chief was seen to reel, clutch wildly at the air and fall to the ground.

But his braves but momentarily halted, to then rush on once more.

Then suddenly, ere another shot came from the repeating rifle, the yells of the Indians that rang in

triumph, suddenly changed in tone to shouts of alarm, and, almost as one man, they wheeled their ponies to the right about and sped madly back down the hill.

What did it mean? What could it mean?

The little band looked on in utter amazement.

Had the death of their chief demoralized them?

No; they still fled as though pursued.

And they were, for out of a break in the hill, suddenly appeared a strange horseman, almost like an apparition.

He was mounted on a large black horse, and he was clad in black from hat to boots, his costume presenting a striking contrast to the long white hair that fell below his shoulders and white beard falling to his belt.

He was certainly a most striking-looking personage, and not appearing to even see the little band standing at bay among the rocks he rode directly down the hill in pursuit of the flying Indians.

Like mad they were riding, glancing back over their shoulders to see if the man followed.

Seeing the weird horseman coming on, his horse with great bounds rushing down the hill, they but strove the harder to urge their ponies to greater flight.

There was something in their strange pursuer that drove them from the prey they had believed almost within their clutch.

An exclamation broke from the lips of Ruth at the sight, while the colonel said:

"Remarkable! What can it mean; who can he be?"

"It is what the Indians call the Mad Spirit, sir, while the soldiers know him as the Hermit Gold Hunter," said Lieutenant Nugent.

"And that does not look much like his being in league with the Indians, lieutenant, as many have said," one of the soldiers remarked.

"No, indeed, for he has certainly saved us, and the Indians are flying in terror before him."

"They saw him before we did, Nugent."

"Yes, colonel, and that is why they so quickly

turned about and fled. See! they are lashing their ponies wildly and he is steadily gaining.

"Shall I follow to see the outcome, sir?"

"No, for we must press on, for I do not like the looks of the weather," and the colonel glanced anxiously at the heavens, which were growing darker and darker under the gathering clouds.

"Yes, sir, it will be well to push on and try and regain the fort trail, for we are far from it and I confess I am not sure about finding it, though we can hasten forward."

"Yes; but what a fortunate escape we made, and all through that mad hermit."

"Who is he, Lieutenant Nugent?" asked Ruth, as calmly as though five minutes before she had not seen death squarely in the face.

"No one at fort seems to know, Miss Field, anything about him, save that he is called the Hermit Gold Hunter, and the Mad Miner as well.

"He comes to the fort four times a year for provisions, and always comes at night, paying in gold dust for what he gets.

"He will not talk, and where he dwells even the scouts cannot find out, so he is a mystery to all, yet supposed to be a mad miner, whose brain has been turned by gold."

"A strange creature, indeed."

"Yes, colonel, and the Indians fear him greatly, though it has been said he was their ally."

"He proved ours to-day."

"Yes, sir."

"A strange country, indeed, this Wild West," said Ruth, as she leaped lightly into her saddle to continue the ride, for all now dreaded the looks of the gathering clouds.

It was after their escape from the Indians that, driven off from their course, they rode through the valley in the mountains where Buffalo Bill came upon their trail when on his way to the Overland stage trail to meet them.

The dread of the little party was fully realized regarding being caught in the threatening blizzard.

The reader has seen that they had gone on from

the spot where they stood at bay against the Indians and were rescued by the Mad Gold Hunter to lose their way, or rather not be able to again reach the fort trail they had been forced to leave, and becoming bewildered in the blinding snowstorm they had halted upon the plain in equally as much danger as when the red horsemen were rushing upon them.

There was one thing that had given Edgar Nugent food for deep thought, but he had kept his discovery to himself, finding no opportunity to make it known to the colonel, and not wishing Ruth to know it.

Before riding away from the rocks, where they had so nearly lost their lives, he had gone to the spot where the dead chief lay just as he had fallen from his horse.

Bending over him to take the gorgeous war bonnet as a trophy, to his amazement he saw that the painted face had the skin of a white man.

"A renegade!"

"By Heavens, but were all of them white men, disguised as Indians?"

"No, I cannot believe that they were, for white men would not have run from the Hermit Gold Hunter.

"No, he was a renegade white man and chief for the redskins.

"I'll search him and see if I can discover a clew as to who he was."

The search revealed a leather belt containing papers and gold coin, and these the lieutenant took along with the war bonnet.

The latter he rolled up and upon returning to the group, said:

"Here is a trophy for you, Miss Field.

"I will strap it on the pack-horse for you."

"Rather a ghastly trophy, lieutenant, but I shall keep it as a souvenir of my advent into this wild borderland."

Having now seen just who they were that had been lost in the blizzard, the reader will doubtless take more interest in the dangers they had to face.

CHAPTER CII.

THE FRONTIER FORT.

Fort Defence, over which Colonel Warren Field had made the perilous pilgrimage to the Far West to take command, was a very desirable military post once it was reached.

It was situated in the midst of a wild country, but where the scenery was grand and picturesque, and, though no habitation was near, no other post, the mining camp, the termination of the stage line, being a hundred miles distant, the garrison was a large one and neither officers nor men grew lonesome or had time to get the blues.

The garrison numbered half-a-thousand souls, for, besides the soldiers, there were the wives and families of a number of the officers, the scouts, stock tenders, teamsters and usual hangers-on about a frontier fort.

There were pleasant quarters for all, with drills, parades, hunting and other sports to break the monotony, while even in that far-away post love held sway, as there was a score of lovely women, and the usual rivalries and jealousies that always follow in feminine footsteps were by no means an exception in Fort Defence.

Major Benton, who was to be relieved by Colonel Field, was a dyed-in-the-wool bachelor, and had an intense hatred for all women, from the fact, it was whispered, that one had cruelly deceived him in his cadet days, for, though he had gone to the Mexican war to win his spurs for her sweet sake, and had come back with that honorable mention, he had found her married to his rival.

It was therefore with a great deal of pleasure and much curiosity that the ladies of the fort, and the young officers were looking forward to the coming of Colonel Field, for he had written Major Benton to kindly have his quarters in the best of trim, as he intended to bring his daughter with him.

"Field's a fool, for it's but one more woman to make trouble here," growled the major to his adjutant.

"I have been told by Nugent, who met her in Texas, that she is a very beautiful girl, sir," replied the adjutant.

"That much the worse, for beautiful women are always raising the devil in some way.

"A homely one is bad enough, but one who has good looks is always causing trouble."

"Miss Field, I have heard, sir, is a lovely character, sings divinely, can paint, rides like a Comanche and can lasso a wild horse, or bring down big game with either rifle or revolver," ventured the adjutant, who liked to tease his superior.

"Mannish ways, has she? She'd better been born a boy, and then I suppose Field would have been kept poor paying his debts, for half you young army cubs play cards for money and drink heavily," and the major stroked his own nose, which had a coloring that only long years of hard drinking could have put there.

As the adjutant saw that the major had turned from women to men, he entirely dropped the subject and said:

"Colonel Field should be here soon, sir, unless he is snowed in somewhere on the trail or mining camp."

"Yes, he should have gotten here last night, so is doubtless there, for Nugent is too good a plainsman to have started for the fort in the teeth of a threatening blizzard."

"Yes, sir, Edgar Nugent has a wise head on him, and will come in after the storm, for the snow won't last long, now that spring is here."

"No, but was not that Mad Gold Hunter in the fort last night?"

"Yes, sir."

"He came in about ten o'clock last night."

"And got snowed in here?"

"No, sir; he left last night."

"In that fearful storm?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then, he is a dead man, sure."

"Somehow I think not, sir, for he came in the storm, made his purchases, packed them on his lead

horse and left, though several of us tried hard to keep him."

"Fool! the coyotes are feasting on his body by this time, for this is one of the worst storms of the winter," and the major looked out from his snug quarters and shuddered as he thought of the Hermit Gold Hunter in that howling tempest of snow.

"The old Gold Hunter doubtless knew what he was doing, sir, though it is bitter weather to be caught in."

"It is, indeed; but I hope Buffalo Bill met Field and his party, for he left this fort to head them off. If he is with them there is no reason to be alarmed."

"Yes, major, Cody is better than an Indian to read signs; but the Mad Miner knows, too, and he would go."

"And he preferred to face it to remaining in the fort!"

"Yes, sir."

"Then he is a fugitive from the gallows, I take it, and is afraid to remain among his fellow-men."

"I wish we could find his haunt and know just who and what he is."

"No one here seems to know anything about him, sir, and he will not talk of himself."

"Well, we'll gather up his bones and bury them after this storm is over, but I do hope Field is not out in it, especially with that girl," and the curt remark of the major showed that after all he did have a tender spot in his crusty old heart for a woman.

CHAPTER CIII.

THE GIRL GOLD HUNTER.

Storm or sunshine seemed alike to Buffalo Bill when duty called him.

When he had guided the colonel and his party to the cabin up the cañon, thus saving their lives, he said, after he had seen them made comfortable, that he was compelled to depart, but would see them the following day.

Then he mounted his horse and rode away, seemingly unmindful of the storm.

The fact was Buffalo Bill had met with a strange adventure when on the trail of the party he had rescued.

It was soon after his striking the trail in the mountain valley, and while riding rapidly along, that he was startled by shots ahead.

Instantly he dismounted and went ahead on foot, to come upon a scene that surprised him.

In the midst of a group of rocks was a girl at bay, crouching there and standing off foes, the scout judged some half-a-dozen in number, who were firing upon her.

From his position he could see the girl, dressed in buckskin shirt, short skirt and black hat, firing at intervals toward points where her foes were concealed in thickets or behind rocks.

The scout took in the situation at once, and rapidly made a flank movement, which brought him in the rear of the girl's assailants.

The first they knew of his presence was a shot, quickly followed by another and another, which in two instances brought down a man.

The others, three in number, bounded to their feet, and started to run, but the girl from her ambush was on the watch for them, as was Buffalo Bill, and rapid fire brought them to bay, and they turned to fight it out, firing at random toward each enemy.

Then followed a score of rapidly-fired shots and then silence, followed by the scout advancing and coming upon the bodies of those who had attacked the girl.

"They are white men disguised as Indians, the worst foes on this border," muttered Buffalo Bill.

Just then the girl walked up to him, her hand extended, and she said:

"You are the great scout, Buffalo Bill, and you have saved my life."

"And who are you?" asked the surprised scout, gazing upon the sun-browned face of the girl, who was barely over eighteen.

"It would be a long story to tell you, so I will say only that you must keep my secret, for my father

and myself are all who are left of a band of gold hunters who came into these wilds before your army did.

"I was a little girl then, and my mother and brother were killed with the other settlers by the Indians."

"Where was your home?"

"In Perchido Valley."

"I know it, and that a settlement was wiped out there."

"Yes; I had gone with my father to his mines, and we two escaped, and since then we have lived to avenge those we loved—I guess we have done so, for even my father is at last tired of the red work, and ready to leave this wild land."

"And where is your father now?"

"Gone to Fort Defence after supplies—it was there that I saw you, and knew who you were, for I have several times gone there, dressed as a boy."

"And who is your father?"

"My father is known under the names of the Mad Hermit, the Mad Gold Hunter and the Crazy Miner, and the Indians, believing him mad, fear him, and they call him the Evil Spirit, and he encourages their fears of him."

"Do you live near here?"

"Not very; but I was out hunting, came upon a fresh trail, got ahead and from ambush saw the party pass me, and it was soldiers from the fort and a young girl.

"Later, feeling that we were going to have a blizzard, I decided to ride after the party and take them to my cabin home, to save them from certain death.

"I was on my way to do so, when I came upon these Indians, who fired upon me and killed my horse; but I ran to cover and fought them."

"And did it well; but they are renegade whites rigged out as Indians."

"Ah! We have had to deal with that kind, too, for they suppose my father has vast riches in gold hidden away—and he has got enough to make us comfortable when we go away from here; but you will go after that party, won't you, for to be caught

out in such a night as this will be, means certain death?"

"I believe you, unless they find a good shelter for a camp."

"Bring them to my cabin, for I shall go to our mountain cave after another horse."

"And where is your cabin?"

"Do you see yonder two mountain peaks?"

"Yes."

"Between them is a valley that ends in a cañon, and it is at the head of that.

"You will find food there, wood, water and plenty of dried grass in the rear shed for the horses."

"I thank you—and you?"

"Will go to our cavern, which is warm and comfortable."

"Why not to your cabin?"

"I do not wish to be seen, and you must not tell, for my father must first know; but let me tell you that I am sure the mountain tribes are combining to move down and surprise the fort; but I will tell you more to-morrow, if you will come to the cave, as we have two allies in the Sioux village, a Pawnee chief and his squaw, who left their tribe for some cause, and whom father befriended.

"These two went to the Sioux, but are friendly with the whites, and the chief told me of the uprising, but is to bring more news to-morrow and meet me at the cave, and I intended to go to the fort and report, as father did not know of the trouble when he left."

"You are a noble girl, and I will take the party to your cabin, and then seek your cave to know more, for what you tell me makes me very anxious, as the Sioux can raise a large force; but this coming storm may delay them a few days."

"It may; but an Indian is hard to freeze, you know; they can stand any weather a wolf can."

"You are right.

"Now, tell me your name, please?"

"Father calls me Dorothy."

"Well, Miss Dorothy, I am glad to know you, and, if you will tell me where to find your cave, I

will push on after the party now to turn them back to safety in your cabin."

"Go into the valley leading to the cabin, as I told you, and when you come to a pine thicket on your left ride into it.

"There you will find a blind cañon, and at its head is our cave."

"I'll find it, never fear; but, as you have lost your horse, you must take one of mine, for I have two, and you shall ride my Black Whirlwind."

"I thank you, Buffalo Bill, and will take good care of him for you; but you must not delay, for night is coming on, and those people must not perish."

"No, indeed," and Buffalo Bill hastened after his horses, while the girl coolly looked over the bodies of the dead renegades.

"I found them well supplied with belts of gold, which you must claim, as they are no use to them."

"No, indeed; I'll——"

"Then we'll share them; but what splendid horses."

"None better; but I'll look after these bodies, if you will get the saddle from my dead horse and put it on your black for me."

This was quickly done, the scout changing his saddle to the white horse, and packing the weapons of the dead renegades upon the black to be carried to the cave home of the strange girl.

After a few more words the scout mounted and rode away, after first taking care of the dead bodies, which was an easy task, as they could be disposed of in the crevices of the rocks near.

How Buffalo Bill at last overtook the colonel and his escort has been told, and in the very nick of time, and, after guiding them to safety, anxious to know what the Pawnee chief had to report about the movements of the Sioux, he rode on his way to the cave, hoping to reach it by dawn.

CHAPTER CIV.

THE MESSENGER ARROW.

It was just dawn when Buffalo Bill, guided easily by the trail left in the snow by the Girl Gold Hunter, for she had gone first to her cabin home and ar-

ranged there for the coming of the party, as has been seen, by building a good fire and setting out provisions, after which, in the snowstorm, she had set out for her cave home.

The "blind cañon" in the cliff was found, and, after a ride of a mile, came its end, where the scout soon discovered the cave, reached by a steep pathway.

Over the mouth of the cave was a long shelter, and within Buffalo Bill heard voices and saw a cheerful blaze.

He called out, and, by some means, all in the cave became dark, and silence followed.

A moment after, from over his head came a voice:

"Oh! it is you, Buffalo Bill—I'll open the door."

It was the girl, and, as the door opened, she said:

"You are prompt, and we have to be careful, you know.

"I dropped the buffalo-robe curtain when you called, to shut out the light, and went up to take a peep at you from our lookout above.

"Bring your horse right in, for this is a double cave; there in that side is where he belongs, and you will find feed for him.

"Then come in and you'll find the Pawnee chief here, for he was waiting when I got back last night.

"I am cooking breakfast, and I'll add more, for I know you are hungry," and when the scout, having made his horse comfortable with Black Whirlwind and several other animals, went into the home cave, he found all cheery there, and a good supply of hot coffee and breakfast—most acceptable to him.

There was also an Indian there in the war bonnet of a chief, and, extending his hand to the scout, the redskin said:

"Me know great White Chief Buffalo Bill—heap good man—heap great man-killer."

"Yes, indeed, Chief Red Heart, I remember you and that your tribe drove you away because you were too friendly with the Sioux, as you married a Sioux squaw."

"Me like Sioux, me like palefaces—better friends to me than my red people. Me glad, for have heap to tell big white chief."

And what Buffalo Bill learned from the Pawnee was enough to set him to thinking of how he could thwart the movements of the Sioux against the fort.

After the three had had a long talk together it was decided that the girl, Dorothy, should go to the cabin and have the colonel's party leave there for the fort as soon as the storm slackened its fury a little, and that she should guide them to the fort, to get to its protection before the Indians could surround it.

Buffalo Bill was to go at once to the fort to give warning, and the Pawnee was to return to his redskins, and, if possible, give notice to the commandant of Fort Defence of the movements and force of the Sioux.

Toward noon the trio departed from the cave, bound upon their separate missions, Buffalo Bill again mounted upon Black Whirlwind and with Ghost in the lead as a pack animal, while Dorothy rode one of her own horses and the Pawnee the animal he had ridden from the Sioux village, from which he had departed upon a pretended scout after pale-faces, not one brave of the village suspecting that he was not the bitter foe of the whites.

It will be remembered that Colonel Field and his party, in the comfortable cabin home of an unknown host, were in no hurry to face the storm to continue on their way, until noon was near at hand and a blow came upon the door, which was made by the sticking into it of an Indian arrow.

Who had fired the messenger arrow into the door of the cabin? It had been fired with considerable force, for the barb stuck deep, and it had struck so hard that all within had believed it was a knock at the door.

But no one was visible when Lieutenant Nugent had thrown open the door.

The arrow alone caught his eye, save that he saw how hard the storm was yet raging.

He looked out into the thicket to see if any one was visible.

No one could be seen.

When Colonel Field took from the young officer the bit of paper, he was quick to read it, for the

words of the lieutenant, that they must leave the cabin at once, had fairly startled him, and he glanced anxiously toward his daughter, for must she again face the biting storm he wondered.

After reading the lines written on the slip of paper, he said:

"This is remarkable, Nugent, and, as you say, we must leave at once."

Turning to his daughter, he continued:

"Ruth, here is a communication, and written in a woman's hand.

"I will read it to you, for all of us must know."

The soldiers drew nearer, and the colonel read aloud:

This blizzard prevented an attack of many warriors upon Fort Defense.

They were assembling in bands, and were driven, by the terrible storm, to seek what shelter they could in the cañons and timbers.

As soon as the storm ends, rendered desperate by cold and hunger, they will attack the fort, and, contrary to the Indian custom, they will attack at night, with every chance of success, for it will be a complete surprise, and they outnumber the garrison four to one.

From this cabin to the fort you will find a fresh trail, made by one horse.

Follow it, and at night camp where you will find a fire burning, for the spot is sheltered.

Be in the saddle again at dawn, and follow the trail from the mining camp to the fort, and which some of your party know.

Reaching this, cease to follow the fresh trail, and push on to the fort with all possible speed, for the storm will blow out to-night, and by to-morrow night the attack will be made.

A RESCUER.

When the colonel had read this, all looked at each other in silence.

"Let me see the writing, father," said Ruth.

He handed the paper to her, and, glancing at it, she said:

"A woman's hand, and an educated one."

"How strange."

"You will heed this warning from our unknown rescuer, sir?"

"Yes, Nugent, we followed our rescuer to these comfortable quarters, and it strikes me that this is thoroughly honest."

"I have no doubt of it, sir.

"Men, saddle the horses at once, and we will get the traps together.

"Miss Field, I shall take that large bear robe as a bed for you to-night, and leave its equivalent," said Edgar Nugent.

In a quarter of an hour the horses were before the cabin door, the riders all bundled themselves up warmly, the fire was covered up, the door closed as found, and the party rode away.

A short distance from the cabin there was a trail found.

It led up to a dwarf cedar, and from there the arrow had doubtless been sent on its mission of warning.

"This is the trail we are to follow, sir."

"Beyond a doubt, lieutenant," replied the colonel, and the horses were at once following in the broken trail in the snow.

The storm still continued, but the trail led out of the cañon and then to the left along the base of a range of hills.

On they went, the afternoon growing rapidly shorter, and the eyes of Lieutenant Nugent trying to penetrate the falling snow to find the fire spoken of in the warning, for he did not care to be caught out in the night, with no better shelter than what they saw about them for Ruth.

The men might stand it, but could she?

Soon they saw heavy timber ahead, and the trail that still led them entered a cañon.

As they went on the fury of the storm was hardly felt there, and, as night drew close, they entered a sheltered spot among high cliffs, where the pines grew thick.

Before them, among the sheltering rocks, a smoke was seen, and, upon reaching it, they saw that it had not been long made, for it had just got to burning well.

"True as steel so far, our unknown guide is," said the lieutenant.

"Yes, and we will be fairly comfortable here ourselves, though the horses will suffer for food," the colonel rejoined.

A creek was near, water was plentiful, the pines

and rocks sheltered the campers from the winds, and Ruth said it was by no means a bad halting-place.

Supper was soon ready, and then all turned in for the night, but were up, had breakfast and were in the saddle when day dawned, and all rejoiced that the storm had ended.

CHAPTER CV.

A RESCUER OF RESCUERS.

With the first glimmer of light Lieutenant Nugent led the way out of the sheltered night camp, and was anxious to find the trail of the night before, which, he feared, however, the storm having continued until late, had been wiped out.

To his surprise, he soon saw the trail ahead, and it had led from a secluded retreat among the rocks where their unknown and mysterious guide had beyond doubt passed the night, not half-a-mile from their own camp.

There was a fire there, and they had no longer a faint trail to follow, but a fresh one.

Hoping to overtake their guide, the lieutenant pushed on more rapidly, but he soon found that the tired and hungry horses could not stand the strain, and let them take their own pace.

The sun soon rose in a clear sky, but the weather was very cold, and all felt anxious about Ruth, though without reason, for she said she was perfectly comfortable.

Thus a couple of hours passed, and Lieutenant Nugent, looking ahead, called out:

"I recognize familiar scenes now, for yonder is the regular trail ahead."

"And there our unknown guide said he, or she, would leave us."

"Yes, colonel; but you really do not suspect it can be a woman?"

"If writing is proof, our guide was a woman, Nugent," answered the colonel, with a smile.

"True, sir; I have nothing to say.

"But see, here is the fort trail, and the fresh one we have been following crosses it.

"But we keep on."

"Yes, sir, for I know where I am now, and the fort is only about twenty miles distant."

The lieutenant turned abruptly to the left into the regular trail, though it was not broken in the least.

A ride of several miles and they came upon a large trail, crossing the unbroken one they were on.

"Indians, sir?"

"Surely."

"One of those bands that our unknown wrote about."

"Yes, sir; and some fifty in number."

"I sincerely hope that we will reach the fort without encountering any redskins," and the young officer glanced at Ruth and then at their nearly used-up horses.

"I hope so, indeed," was the low reply.

But suddenly, after riding some miles further, Edgar Nugent drew rein.

"Hark!"

All listened attentively.

"Firing?"

"Yes, colonel."

"Some distance ahead?"

"Yes, sir."

"What do you think it can be?"

"A search party from the fort, sir, after us, and they have run upon a band of redskins."

"It is just that."

"Perhaps our arrival will stampede the Indians."

"We can try it, sir, especially as we cannot well make a flank movement along here off the trail."

"Lead on, Nugent; we follow."

On they went, the men looking to their weapons, and, after a short ride, they ascended a rise to come upon a thrilling scene.

Down in a basin was a group of soldiers dismounted and formed in a circle, while they were fighting off a band of fully a hundred Indians who were crouching around them in the snow and firing upon them.

"Colonel, it is the search party and outnumbered."

"I recognize a brother officer there, and they will be overwhelmed if we do not save them."

"In God's name, what can we do, Nugent, though I am more than willing?"

"They are all dismounted, sir, and have their ponies half-a-mile back in those thickets, so if we stampede them we can dash through, call to Lieutenant Edmonds to be ready, and then it will be a running fight to the fort."

"You are a born soldier, Lieutenant Nugent, and it is worth a risk to try your plan."

"A courier can be sent on at full speed to call for help, sir, to come and meet us."

"Yes, lead on."

"Please keep by the side of your daughter, colonel."

"Burke, give me your bugle."

The soldier unslung his bugle and handed it to the young officer, who at once blew a loud and ringing cavalry call.

It was heard above the firing and yells of the Indians, and the latter turned in wild dismay to behold a group, as they supposed, officers of a large cavalry force, riding over the hill.

With wild yells they broke in a mad stampede for their ponies in the thicket, while the soldiers at bay poured after them a hot fire.

Waiting until the redskins were well on the run, Lieutenant Nugent shouted:

"Now!"

Down the hill they rode, and Edgar Nugent cried, in a voice that rang over the valley:

"Mount your men, Edmonds, and make a running fight of it to the fort."

"Send a courier on your fastest horse for help to meet us!"

"It is Ed Nugent, and he has saved us," cried an officer with Bert Edmonds.

"Yes, and the colonel and his daughter are with him," added a second lieutenant.

Lieutenant Bert Edmonds made no reply, but his face showed that he did not like being rescued by Edgar Nugent's bold act.

But life was at stake, and, leaving his dead, he was ready for flight when the little party came up at a run.

CHAPTER CVI.

THE WEIRD HORSEMAN.

Lieutenant Nugent had seen with the eye of a true soldier the chances to save a comrade and his men, as also his own party.

If, as the presence of the Indians there was an indication, the unknown had told only the truth, and there must be other bands near.

To make a flank movement to reach the fort the chances were that they would fall in with some of these bands.

In the condition their horses then were it was a certainty that they could not escape by flight.

Then the nature of the country thereabout would necessitate many miles to be gone over in a flank movement to reach the fort, not to speak of leaving Lieutenant Bert Edmonds in a bad way.

As long as the young officer ordered with such calm judgment, Colonel Field left him in full control, not once interfering.

The colonel now saw all as did Edgar Nugent, and he did not doubt their arrival would stampede the Indians temporarily, and give the search party a chance to escape, for he felt sure they had only ventured out in such weather to look him up.

The dash was therefore made, Lieutenant Bert Edmonds grasped the situation as intended, the wounded men were mounted with a comrade behind them to hold them in the saddle, and when the daring little party came up and formed the soldiers who were at bay fell in behind them, and a flight was begun for life.

A courier had already sped away toward the fort for help, and Lieutenant Edmonds called out:

"Your rank gives you command, Nugent."

"Thanks; I do not assume it, however, so remain in command," and Edgar Nugent rode ahead with Colonel Field and Ruth.

The Indians were not long in discovering how cleverly they had been tricked, and they gave vent to their rage in wild yells, while they hastened to their ponies and started in pursuit.

But the soldiers had now gotten a good start, and the men riding at a rapid canter, firing back as they went at the redskins who pursued them.

Rifle bullets and arrow heads flew thick and fast, and Lieutenant Nugent, seeing a soldier killed and others wounded, suggested that Colonel Field and his daughter push ahead still faster to get out of range.

"I will send Ruth ahead with your two men, Nugent, but remain here with the command.

"And I shall remain also with the command, father, so it is useless to urge the contrary," grimly replied Ruth, and the colonel said no more on the subject.

On they dashed, keeping up a running fight, with a soldier and a horse hit now and then, and a brave and a pony in their turn going down.

But the redskins were drawing dangerously near the fort, and they begun to slacken their speed.

They realized that the courier would bring help, that their foes had escaped and that they must retreat, especially as they were not anxious to be pursued just then too far from the fort, and only wished to be considered a band of prowlers.

But as they drew rein, suddenly a warning cry came from Edgar Nugent:

"Halt! we are headed off!"

It was true, for a band of redskins suddenly rode into the trail ahead of them, and formed in line of battle half-a-hundred strong.

The soldiers came to a halt, for their pursuers saw their predicament and begun to press on once more with the wildest yells.

"We must stand at bay, Edmonds, among yonder boulders," cried Lieutenant Nugent, calling back to his brother officer.

"It is all that we can do," came the answer.

But, as the words were spoken, a wild, terrible warcry was heard, almost above them, and upon a

cliff a hundred yards on their right appeared a horse and rider.

The cry arose among both bands of Indians, before and in the rear of the soldiers:

"The Evil Spirit! The Evil Spirit!"

It was spoken in their own tongue, but soldiers who knew their language heard what was said and understood it.

Again came that awful wacry, and the arms of the rider were seen to wave back the Indians, while he suddenly threw a red blanket over his head, concealing his body from view.

But the Indians seemed to read the sign as one of ill-omen to them, and they turned with weird cries and fled, leaving the soldiers grouped together and looking at each other in amazement.

But the horseman had been recognized by the soldiers as well, for, at sight of him, several had called out:

"The Mad Hermit!"

"It is the Hermit Gold Hunter!"

Then Lieutenant Nugent said:

"We have seen him before. A second time has he saved us!"

"Yes, a second time; but, see, he is going," and, as Colonel Field spoke, the horseman, still covered with his red blanket, turned and rode away from the cliff, where, like a phantom he had appeared.

CHAPTER CVII.

THE MEETING.

"There is no reason for flight now.

"See! there is not a redskin in sight," said Lieutenant Nugent, pointing up and down the trail, where the Indians had had them hemmed in, but had now completely disappeared.

"There is some remarkable power that strange man holds over them which I do not understand, Lieutenant Nugent."

"It is a fact that they regard him as a madman, sir, so he is sacred in their eyes, and, besides, he is looked upon as an evil spirit and they shun him with terror. But we will ride on now, sir."

"Yes; but I wish to meet that lieutenant now. Will you ask him to ride to the front and join us?"

"Certainly, sir; and I believe you will meet in him an old friend, if I mistake not."

"You called him Edmonds, I believe," said the colonel, as they rode on once more, he on one side of Ruth, the lieutenant on the other.

"Yes, sir."

"I know of but one Edmonds, and he was not in the army, but a ranchero in Texas. You remember him, Ruth?" and the colonel had a strange expression in his eyes.

"Can I ever forget him, father? He saved us both from being captured by the Comanches, and yet I could never learn to like him, even with that in his favor. Yonder gentleman is so muffled up I cannot see his face; but I recall when last I saw Mr. Edmonds in New York, for he called on me at my boarding-school there, and made the threat of going into the army. Surely this cannot be he," and, watching Ruth closely as she spoke, Edgar Nugent felt sure that she was impressed greatly by her remembrance of the man of whom she spoke.

"This man bears the name of Bert Edmonds, was appointed from civil life not a year ago, and more than that about him I do not know," said Nugent.

"Bert Edmonds."

"It is the man."

These words fell from the lips of father and daughter together.

Then Ruth quickly asked:

"Lieutenant Nugent, do you not consider that our coming saved that officer and his men from death?"

"They were in close quarters, Miss Field."

"It certainly was a rescue, Ruth; yet why do you ask?"

"Because, father, as we, you and I, were alone and we rescued him, it wipes out the debt, or cancels it, of his having saved us. Bring the lieutenant up, please, sir, and let us have the agony over," and Ruth spoke in ill-humor, Nugent thought, while he heard her muttered words:

"He has kept his threat to enter the army, and more, is stationed at the post where we are to be."

Wondering at the strange meeting of the Fields and Bert Edmonds again, and confident that there was some mystery back of it all he could not fathom, Edgar Nugent rode back to where Lieutenant Edmonds was looking to the comfort of his wounded men, and said:

"I congratulate you, Edmonds. But the coming of that Mad Gold Hunter, as they call him, was most timely."

"You surely do not consider that the Indians ran from him?"

"Certainly. What else, if not from him?"

"There is our fort, on account of the turn in the trail they did not see our pursuers, and believing we were too strong for them, fled."

"Not a bit of it. They heard the pursuit if they did not see their comrades from where they were, and the Mad Hermit alone stampeded them."

"Why he did the same thing for us a couple of days ago."

"Nonsense! but I thank you for the bold charge you made, though we were in no danger."

"Still it was the best way for you to get through."

Edgar Nugent smiled and replied:

"Yes, best for all, as it has turned out."

"I hope Colonel Field and his daughter are well, and appreciate our coming after them in such weather."

"They are well, yes; but a soldier and a soldier's daughter hardly appreciate a soldier doing his duty at any time, I take it. But, come, they sent me for you, as you did not come up, and they expect to meet an old friend in Lieutenant Edmonds."

"Said Miss Field so?"

"She spoke of you as one to whom a debt of gratitude was due for some service rendered them, and also as having met you both in Texas and New York; but they did not know of your having entered the army."

"No, I thought I would surprise them."

"As they have sent for me, I will go with you, Nugent."

Edgar Nugent simply bowed, and the two rode in silence.

"I believe I need hardly introduce Lieutenant Edmonds, Colonel Field," said Edgar Nugent, as they rode.

"Oh, no, for it is an acquaintance of four years ago."

"I am glad to see you, Mr. Edmonds, and welcome you into the army," said the colonel, cordially.

But the greeting of Ruth was not so cordial, yet she extended her gloved hand and said:

"Perhaps the army is the very place for Lieutenant Edmonds, as he has had considerable experience in Indian fighting on the prairies of Texas."

CHAPTER CVIII.

BUFFALO BILL'S CLEVER RUSE.

Amid the thundering guns in a salute due his rank, Colonel Field rode into Fort Defense, escorted immediately by Lieutenant Bert Edmonds' guard, and followed by the troops that Major Benton had sent out to his aid.

It was a hearty welcome both the commandant and his beautiful daughter received, and every woman's eye was turned upon Ruth, as she rode along, to see if she was indeed as lovely as reported.

"She certainly rides well," said one.

"And is an exquisite figure," added another, for Ruth had dropped off the military cloak she had worn.

"How gracious she is," remarked the wife of a captain of cavalry.

And so on the comments of the women ran, not one being to the detriment of the fair stranger.

As to the young officers, they voted her "divine" at sight, but then they were already prejudiced in her favor.

The colonel's soldierly appearance and handsome face won much praise also.

"Very different from old crusty Benton," said a young officer.

"Just my idea of a soldier, and he's already made a fine record," responded another.

"And he will add to it here."

"Yes; he will have the chance."

"A thorough disciplinarian, but always courteous to officers and men."

"I wish I had been in young Nugent's place, for he's got the lead of us."

"They've had trouble, too, depend on it, for Nugent had six men and an ambulance when he went away."

"Yes, and Edmonds rescued them, so he's on even terms with Nugent."

So went the comments of the young officers as they chatted together after the arrival of their colonel.

In the meantime the party had ridden to headquarters, which Major Benton had in fine order for them, having himself moved into Bachelor's Row to give up all to the colonel and his daughter.

He was, however, on hand to receive them, grasped the hand of the colonel, whom he knew, and, to the surprise of the lookers-on, helped Ruth from her saddle with marked courtesy and grace.

Then the major did more, for he led them into their new home, showed what improvements he had made, and played the most hospitable host.

"You will dine with us, of course, major?" said the colonel.

"Oh, no, thank you; I'll go to the bachelor's mess, and will return this afternoon late to turn over the command to you."

"My dear major, there is no hurry as to that, but there is need of quick action to prepare against an attack by Indians which I happen to know will be made to-night."

"Nonsense! This weather will freeze them out."

"No, for they were coming to make the attack before the storm, but got snowed in, and will make it to-night. We saw two bands of them—three, in fact—and the trail of a fourth, so you will kindly keep command until the affair is over with."

"Yes, Buffalo Bill, my chief of scouts, came in and reported your coming, and also the threatened attack of the Sioux, and I, therefore, have no fear of them when that fine fellow is watching them, for he at once left again to keep his eye upon them, and also to look up a mad miner who left the fort in the storm, and, we fear, has been snowed under."

"Why, major, it was Buffalo Bill who saved us, and——"

"I know that he left you at a place of refuge, and came here."

"And the mad miner is safe, for he it was who put the Indians to flight an hour ago."

"Good! and Cody will report later," said the major.

And two hours after, Buffalo Bill came into the fort to report that the Sioux, aware that they could not surprise the garrison, half-starved and frozen,

were in retreat by separate bands toward their village.

Then, by questioning the scout, it was learned that he had found the Mad Hermit and brought him back to the fort, as he was nearly overcome with the cold.

"Then, was it not the Mad Hermit who drove off the force that attacked us, Scout Cody?" asked the colonel.

Buffalo Bill smiled and said:

"I took the miner's rig, sir, when I heard the firing, and played the Evil Spirit, as I knew the ruse would scatter the Indians.

"But the miner is no more mad than I am, only, played the part to have the Indians fear him, and to save his gold; but he is in the surgeon's care now, sir, and I must go to his retreat and bring his daughter here," and, the secret being out now, the scout told all about Dorothy, and added:

"She is a fine girl, and her father has educated her as well as he could, in spite of his wild life, and they are going to return to the miner's old home to live, as soon as he can do so; but he knows the retreat of Solaris, the outlaw, and his band, and will go with me, Colonel Field, to guide a force of soldiers there as soon as he is able.

Half-an-hour after Buffalo Bill started on his trail to the home of Dorothy, to bring the girl back with him to the fort.

Within two days he was back again, accompanied by Dorothy and half-a-dozen horses, laden down with packs of the belongings of the miner and his daughter.

A few days after the miner was able to start on the expedition against the outlaws, led by Lieutenant Nugent. It proved a complete wipe-out of the band, Buffalo Bill killing Chief Solaris in an encounter at close quarters.

Later the miner—Gabriel Goodrich by name—and his daughter Dorothy left for their old home, which they reached in safety.

At the fort Ruth Field became very popular with all. But her hero who won her heart was Edgar Nugent, and she became his wife, while Bert Edmonds, in his disappointment at not winning her by turning soldier, resigned from the army in disgust.

As for Buffalo Bill, his duties as scout were soon to call him into new and thrilling dangers.

LOOK AT THIS, BOYS!

19 PRIZES. || ANECDOTE PRIZE CONTEST || 19 PRIZES

WHO HAS HAD THE MOST EXCITING EXPERIENCE?

THAT'S the idea, boys. You have all had some narrow escapes, some dangerous adventures in your lives! Perhaps it was the capsizing of a boat, or the scaling of a cliff, or a close shave in a burning building, or something else equally thrilling.

WRITE IT UP JUST AS IT HAPPENED.

We offer a handsome Prize for the most exciting and best written anecdote sent us by any reader of **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**. The incident, of course, must relate to something that has happened to the writer himself, and it must also be strictly true.

It makes no difference how short the articles are, but no contribution must be longer than 500 words.

HERE ARE THE PRIZES!

TWO FIRST PRIZES.

For Two Most Exciting and Best Written Anecdotes.

Two first-class Spalding Standard Athletic Sweaters. Made of the finest Australian lambs' wool, exceedingly soft. Full fashioned to body and arms, and without seams of any kind. Colors: White Navy Blue, Black and Maroon.

TWO SECOND PRIZES.

For Two Second Best Anecdotes.

Two pairs of Raymond's All Clamp Ball Bearing Roller Skates. Bearings of the finest tempered steel, with 128 steel balls. For speed no skate has ever approached it.

FIVE THIRD PRIZES.

For Five Next Best Anecdotes.

Five pairs of Winslow's Speed Extension Ice Skates, with extension foot plates. These skates have detachable welded steel racing runners, also an extra set of short runners for fancy skating.

FOR NEXT TEN BEST ANECDOTES.

A Spalding 12 inch "Long Distance" Megaphone. Made of fire board, capable of carrying the sound of a human voice one mile, and in some instances, two miles. More fun than a barrel of monkeys.

The contest will continue until Dec. 1st, next.

Send in your anecdotes at once, boys. We are going to publish all of the best ones during the progress of the contest.

We will have to reserve to ourselves the right of judging which anecdote has the most merit, but our readers know that they may depend upon Street & Smith and on their absolute fairness and justice in conducting contests. This one will be no exception to the rule.

REMEMBER!

Whether your contribution wins a prize or not, it stands a good chance of being published together with the name of the writer.

To become a contestant for these prizes, cut out the **Anecdote Contest Coupon**, printed herewith, fill it out properly, and send it to **BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY**, care of Street & Smith, 238 William St., New York City, together with your anecdote. No anecdote will be considered that does not have this coupon accompanying it.

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PRIZE ANECDOTE DEPARTMENT.

During the progress of the Anecdote Prize Contest this space is being devoted to the publication of the best anecdotes sent in by the contestants.

Here are some of those received this week. Read them, boys, and then send in your own. There are still plenty of chances for everybody to win the prizes offered.

A Horrible Dream.

(By Harry Berrigan, Lima, Ohio.)

Not feeling good, I went to bed early one evening and was soon fast asleep. I had a horrible dream. I dreamed I went to the fair and that there was to be a balloon ascension. The professor wanted to take somebody up with him, and I volunteered to go with him. The balloon was an old-fashioned one with a basket to stand in. We got in and the balloon was cut loose and up we went. The professor was looking down at the people when all of a sudden he fell out. Imagine me all alone and going higher and higher. For quite a while the balloon soared on, then it began to settle down and when it came to the ground I found that I was in a wild-looking country and could see no sign of any one anywhere. So I sat down on a stump, but pretty soon I began to feel hungry. I got up and walked all around, but could see no sign of a house. I came back to the balloon about dark and covered up in the canvas and went to sleep. When I awoke in the morning I was almost starved to death. I walked a good distance that day hunting for a house, but could not find one. I returned about dark and once more cuddled up in the canvas and went to sleep. Awaking in the morning I was so weak I could hardly stand. But I managed to get on my feet and started to walk, but I did not get far, but sank down unconscious. When I came to I could see a man coming toward me with provisions in a bag. I cried out in joy and reached out to receive the things when I awoke.

A Close Call.

(By Walter N. Hibler.)

It was one day in the early fall when my brother Tom and I started out to get some game for dinner the next day. After we had been out for some time and had seen nothing we wanted we separated and I went deeper into the forest. Farther and farther I went, until at last I found myself in a part of the forest with which I was not very familiar, and night was coming on. Darker and darker it grew, and at last I realized that I was lost. Still I walked on until it became so dark that I could

hardly see my hand before my face. I picked up a piece of dry wood and lighted it as a torch, but it made a very poor one.

Suddenly I beheld two gleaming balls of fire before me and realizing that I was face to face with a wild beast I dropped my torch and, raising my rifle, fired. There was a snarl, and suddenly a heavy body struck me and I was thrown to the ground and my rifle fell from my grasp. Then I found myself held down by the body of a wildcat and was looking into a pair of gleaming eyes.

Never will I forget that moment. I broke out in a cold sweat. I trembled. I felt that all hope was gone and closed my eyes.

What seemed like hours passed, then I heard the report of a rifle and the body of the wildcat fell off of me, and I knew no more until I found myself lying on the bank of a creek near by and my brother bathing my face and hands with water. It was his rifle that had saved me.

He had gone home in the evening and, not finding me there, had gone out to look for me and hearing my rifle shot had hurried in the direction of the sound, and came up just in time to save my life.

As soon as I was able we started for home, where we arrived about midnight, and it is safe to say that thereafter I was more careful in my aim when I shot at wild beasts.

A Big Jump.

(By Tip Panick, Emporia, Kansas.)

As I wish to enter in the Anecdote Prize Contest, I will now relate an unexpected encounter with a wolf.

In the summer of 1898 my brother Arthur started up an Indian tribe among the boys of Fifth avenue. It was a success, and the tribe was called the Wickapaws, with Pontiac (my brother) the chief.

One morning we started for the timber for a couple of days of camping. As we neared Tumble Creek we saw two boys on top of a cliff about forty feet high, and in a cave about twenty-nine feet up this cliff were ten boys dressed like soldiers.

We sneaked as close as we could. Then, with that

bloody warcry, "Hi, yi!" eighteen boys clad in feathers and paint scaled the walls of the cliff on into the cave. Then there was a hand-to-hand combat. The soldiers were driven from the cave to the bottom of the cliff, where they threw rocks at us.

While the battle was going on I made my way to a rock which hung out over the rest. I was shooting arrows on the soldiers below when Walter Galey yelled to me to run for my life.

I turned to see what was the matter and caught sight of a wolf about ten feet above me, licking his chops and crouching for a spring. A wolf was an uncommon thing to be seen near Emporia, but there had been two lurking around Sarby's pasture, and this was one of them. I had no time to think, but something inside of me told me to jump, and I sprang far out into the air just as the wolf passed where my head was a second before. We both hit the water at once, but I was on top.

The wolf came to the surface first and when I rose he sank his claws in the top of my head. I took a breath and sank again. I did not lose my mind, but swam under the water as long as I could. Then I rose in time to see my noble dog Sanco jump into the water, grab the animal by the throat and choke him to death.

I tried to swim to the bank, but the current was too swift. Art was about to jump in after me, but I told him to get the wolf and I would make it all right.

The current carried me about half-a-mile down the stream before I could gain the bank. I ran to the boys as fast as I could. Just as I reached them I sank to the ground unconscious.

The boys skinned the wolf and gave me the skin. I then became Big Jump Chief of the Wickapaws, which is going to-day.

A Daring Rescue.

(By George Sutherland, New Whatcom, Wash.)

Being a constant reader of your *BUFFALO BILL WEEKLY*, and seeing the offers for the boys who could write the most interesting and exciting adventures about themselves, I thought I would write you about an adventure which I had on Lake Whatcom.

One day my brother and I thought that we would visit Lake Whatcom, rent a boat and go boat riding. I took the oar and my little brother sat in the stern.

We had a cranky old boat and it was quite rough. Just as we got around the point by Silver Beach a big wave came and capsized the boat.

I knew that I was all right, as we were only about one hundred feet from shore, but my brother couldn't swim. Well, as soon as the boat tipped over I looked for Wallace, but couldn't see him.

Thinking that he might be under the boat, I dove under, but he was not there.

I dove out from under the boat, but was losing hope of ever seeing Wallace again when his head came to the surface right by me.

I grabbed him, put one of my arms under his to keep his head up and swam to the boat.

I managed to get him and myself on the bottom of the old boat, and securing one of the oars I paddled to shore, where I rolled my brother till he came to. Then I built a fire and we dried our clothes, turned the boat over and rowed it back to the boat-house.

My First Experience With a Muskrat.

(By J. C. Roderick, Provincetown, Mass.)

I was going after my trap as usual one morning when I espied a muskrat house in the distance. I went to it and was making a hole in the middle in order to set my trap when a muskrat sprang out of the hole at my throat. I knocked him off with my arm about three feet, but he sprang at me again, and scratched my face. I took out my pocket knife and when he sprang at me for the third time I gave him a cut in the back. This seemed to enrage him, for he sprang at me so quick that he scratched my face again and knocked my hat off. I caught him by the back with my left hand and with my right I cut his neck. He weighed five pounds and measured one foot and three-quarters from his head to his tail.

An Exciting Adventure.

(By Daniel R. Coleman, Mesilla Park, New Mexico.)

One morning this last summer when I was out in the mountains on a camping trip, I rose bright and early, took my lunch, rifle and revolver, and started out on a hunt, to be gone all day.

I kept up a steady walk until noon, then I sat down in the shade of a tree, ate my lunch and took a nap.

As soon as I awoke, I started on again. I had been walking for some time and had not seen anything to shoot, and was getting very anxious to shoot something. When all at once I heard a low, deep growl.

I didn't know what it was, as I had never heard such a hideous sound before. I at once made ready to fight whatever might appear, but nothing appeared, so I started on again, and as I did so, I heard the sound again.

I waited a few moments, but heard nothing more, so I made up my mind to try and find out what kind of an animal it was making the noise.

I started in the direction from which the sound had come.

I had just come around a bluff when I saw not more than ten feet from me a pair of mountain lions laying in the mouth of a cave.

One of them was crouched ready to spring at me. I would not have fired at him at such a close range, but I knew if I attempted to move backward he would spring at me and so as quick as a flash I raised my rifle to my shoulder and fired. My bullet did its work well, for the lion leaped into the air and fell dead.

Before I could reload my rifle, the other lion sprang at me and struck me full in the breast so hard as to knock me off of a bluff about six feet high.

I got to my feet as quick as possible and started off with all of my speed, which was very, very much, so I thought.

I did not do this any too quick, for the lion was but a few feet behind me. Seeing that running was of no use, I snatched my revolver from my pocket and turned on the lion. I fired four shots before I succeeded in hitting him in a vital place. As soon as I had stabbed him with my hunting knife, which I carried in my belt, I went back and got my rifle, which I had lost when falling off of the bluff. I got it and went up to the den where the lions had been a few moments before.

I found that there was a pair of nearly grown cubs there. I did not care to risk my life any more with the blamed things, so I set out for camp and reached it just about dark.

A Wild Chase.

(By Wm. Eastian, Cleveland, Ohio.)

While out one day late in October with two fellows, about one and a half miles the other side of South Park, which is about four miles from Willow, and about ten miles from my vicinity, we saw in the distance an old farmhouse, unoccupied. We made up our minds to camp there for the night.

The farmhouse was a rude structure probably built by the people who lived there. It had four rooms consisting of a kitchen, a pantry, a closet and another room, which resembled an Isocles triangle, having but two windows and one door leading into the kitchen. It had a garret, but it looked as though it never was used.

On first entering you could see nothing but a few footmarks of mud and clay, which we supposed some wanderer had made while looking for a lodging, but on close inspection the footmarks led to a cellar door, which we supposed was a trap door. But we cleared our mind that it was no trap door by placing a large boulder on the door.

That night passed fine and probably just as good as at home. The next morning we washed our faces in the cool spring which ran near the house. We then went out and spent the day in hunting and fishing. Toward evening we strolled back to the old farmhouse, which was very near two miles from the place we were then

standing. It was about eight o'clock before we got back and ready to take a rest, when suddenly we saw that the boulder had disappeared while we were gone, but not paying much attention to it we lay on the trap door, which gave way, and we fell into the trap of some rascal, so Tom Shrater lit his lantern to see if there was any means of escape. There were no steps, but there was a large crack in the wall, which we broke open and crawled out, when suddenly as the last of us came out we heard footsteps of two people who seemed to come nearer, but passing us they entered the house and were surprised at seeing the trap open, so one let the other down.

We then crawled along the grass about one hundred feet, when suddenly we heard the man in the cellar exclaim, "There has been some one down here and they broke the wall where that crack was."

"Hurry, give me your hand; I will pull you up and we may yet catch them," came from the man above.

Hearing these exclamations, we ran just to be followed by these two rascals for about two miles when suddenly we saw the headlight of an engine coming our way.

We all three piled into the car when suddenly the two men appeared and threw large stones at us, one hitting me in the chest, the other on my forehead, knocking me senseless, of which I still have that scar, which resembles a four-leaf clover.

We came to town just at midnight, being out two nights and two days.

My Experience in the Water.

(By Stephen E. Fowler, Jr., Eldorado, Kansas.)

It was a spring day in the year of 1896. There were five of us—two boys and my two brothers, and myself, one being older than myself, one younger.

It being warm, we went in a swimming. Only my older brother and one of the other boys could swim. Of course, I had to go in, and at that age I thought I was very smart. I was thirteen years old. After the others had gone out and were dressing I started out to show off. Suddenly I went over a step off and went in over my head. I had some sense left, for when I went to the bottom I gave myself an upward shove, and I would wave my hands wildly. At first they thought I was a fooling, but my brother, who could swim, saw me and knew that I was not fooling and he made for me, and caught me as I was sinking. I jumped on his back, and we both went under once, then he tried it again, and got to shallow water, and we both got out in safety, although I had a lot of dirty water in me. They can all talk of facing lions, tigers, snakes, but I would rather face anything than drowning.

BOYHOODS OF FAMOUS MEN.

This department contains each week the story of the early career of some celebrated American. Watch for these stories and read them, boys. They are of the most fascinating interest.

Those already published are: No. 1.—Buffalo Bill; No. 2.—Kit Carson; No. 3.—Texas Jack; No. 4.—Col. Daniel Boone; Nos. 5 and 6.—David Crockett; No. 7.—General Sam Houston.

No. 8.—Lewis Wetzel.

THE RENOWNED VIRGINIA RANGER AND SCOUT.

Lewis Wetzel, the celebrated ranger whose fame among the early settlers of Virginia was second to none, was one of the most efficient scouts and practical woodmen of his day. His services were eagerly called for by the new settlers anxious to found their claims in the further West.

Under the protection of this scout they felt safe, for they no sooner landed in the neighborhood where he had been known all his life than stories of him were told them, and they were advised "to get Lewis Wetzel and then they need have no fear of Indian interlopers, for the Indians held him in mortal dread, and always gave him a wide berth wherever he might happen to be."

Wetzel's father had been killed by the Indians, and Lewis swore eternal vengeance on them. This probably accounted for the redskins' dread of him, for he did not hesitate to kill every Indian that crossed his path.

In appearance Lewis Wetzel was large and strong as an ox. His hair, when combed out, reached clear to his ankles, and gave him a very ferocious appearance.

The most exciting event of Wetzel's boyhood was his capture by the Indians.

He and his older brother were at the time living with their parents in a small cabin near Wheeling, Va. It was a year or two before the Revolutionary War.

The boys were asleep one night, and their father, John Wetzel, was sitting beside the open fire talking to his wife.

Suddenly there was a rustling outside the door, and a pressure against it. Mr. Wetzel put his eye to the knot-hole. Outside, one by one, tall shadows passed by the door. There must have been twenty-five shadows. Each shadow, as it went along, pressed softly up to the door, then joined the other shadows collected a little apart from the house in an ominous company.

"What is it?" his wife whispered, awe in her voice.

"Indians!" he whispered, in reply.

"But why do they come thus?"

"Wait!"

They had not long to wait. The shadows again separated and went to the back of the cabin. There came a weird, soft tramp in the night, a soft tramp that carried a grim purpose with it. There came a burst at the door, and a plank gave way. Through the opening made thus John Wetzel fired his gun. There was a shriek outside.

"What have you done?" wailed his wife, wringing her hands.

"Murder!" he said, "and they will do more."

She ran back to her boys and clasped them to her, wildly praying to the Supreme Power to guard them from all harm. She looked at her husband; he was white as death.

"You cannot hold out against them," she said.

"No," he answered.

"Then why not ask them what they want?"

"Look!"

There was a thin streak of yellow light shining in from the night outside, through the opening left by the shattered plank. Her look told her everything.

"Fire!" whispered John Wetzel.

"They are never going to burn us!" cried the agonized woman.

There was a rasping sound all around the cabin, as the silent feuds outside piled up the branches from the dry trees into a mountain over the little cabin. Then there came a tender crackling; then fifty thin threads of flame sprang up. Then for the first time there was a sound of voices outside: a shout of joy. Once again John Wetzel's bullet sped on its way. Even once more, and the place was as though filled with a great sun, so light the flames were. A great blazing log tumbled in on the floor; the roof was a mass of tinder. The place was scorching hot, and outside, joining with the shouts of the Indians, came the frightened bellowing of liberated cattle and the bleating of scurrying sheep; while the quick stamps on the ground told of loosened half-wild horses making for the river.

The mother had torn a blanket from the bed and

thrown it over the boys to protect them from the flames. The smoke filling the place blinded her. She could no longer see her husband. A part of the roof fell in, and with it came a crowd of yelling savages.

"John! John!" she shrieked, and hurried toward the place where she thought he must be. She was jostled against by fighting Indians, who were now stamping on the fire to put it out. She caught a glimpse of her husband in the arms of three or four painted savages, hurried from the cabin, struggling for his life. Shrieking, she was after him.

She had almost touched him, when a gleam of something bright blinded her—a tomahawk in the hands of a fierce brute over her husband's head.

There was a quick movement of the Indian's hand, a whoop from his lips as the instrument descended with a dull thud and crashed through the skull of John Wetzel. Then she knew no more. The early morning light brought its dew and songs of birds.

The wife and mother had fallen in the long rank grass and been completely hidden from her would-be murderers. She raised herself and looked around.

There was the smouldering cabin. That was all. She knew that her husband was killed, she had seen the deed done.

She thought her children were burned up with the cabin.

Groaning in her agony, she determined to make her way to Wheeling, where her other children were. Fierce and weak, clutching her arms, she fled on.

But the boys had not been murdered, as the mother's despair had suggested to her. They had been discovered by the Indians beneath the blanket in the burning hut, where Lewis had been struck in the breast by a bullet which tore away a piece of the bone.

The conquerers spared these boys because of their extreme youth, and drove them before the band across the country, captives.

On the way, by the light from his burning home, Lewis, looking down, saw in the crushed and trampled grass the mutilated body of his father.

The boy stopped abruptly and seemed turned to stone.

He looked around, and in the red light as far as his eye could reach rolled the boundless prairie, with groups of beasts huddled close together, gazing with wild, affrighted eyes upon the strange light. Great birds swept by toward the burning building, wheeled about it afar off, the circles eddying nearer to the flame, nearer and nearer still, until, with shrill cries, they darted into the heart of the flame and perished there. There was a soft crackling in the grass, and spots of fire leaped up here and there. The moon looked red and sullen through the smoke. That was what the boy saw. His brother at his side was bitterly weeping and cowering before their

red enslavers. But Lewis Wetzel shed no tear, uttered no groan.

"Did you see father there in the grass?" wept his brother.

There was no reply.

"Father is dead!" wept his brother.

Still there was no reply to his wailing. Yet in that instant of horrid sight there had come to the silent boy the bitter hatred that never left him thereafter—something that had meant life and being to him went from him into the dead body of his father, as dead as that body. A hush came upon him that left its impression forever after in his face. The love he bore the murdered man lived with ten-fold intensity, and deadened every other natural feeling. But that love, having nothing now on which to expend its wealth in fond endearments and happy hopes, turned immediately it knew the outrage done it into irrevocable hatred against the slayers and their whole kind—a fiendish perfection of hatred that bordered closely upon madness, but which had not a grain of madness in it.

"White boys hurry!" said the tormentors that night of the murder.

A brawny chief came up and caught Lewis by his hair and threw him forward. The boy was only convalescent from smallpox, and the wound in his breast bled profusely.

"White boy bleeds easy," said the chief; "his blood is thin," and gave the lad another thrust forward. Still there was no wincing, nor a sound of complaint. "Good!" cried the chief, with a sort of brute admiration. "White boy no coward. He will be chief yet. If he will not be chief, he will roast."

The Indians, though as a race peculiarly deficient in the comic element, and to a degree blind to the ludicrous, laughed at this sally of their chief, and further sought to provoke the boy in order to test his endurance. They received no notice for their manoeuvres, although one of them caught up little Jacob and pretended to tomahawk him.

They then tied the arms of the boys with thongs drawn so tightly as to cause exquisite pain. The smaller boy wept in agony; his brother never winced. As a new variety of sport, the two boys were then bound about the knees, and, prodded from behind, were forced into a sort of jog-trot inexpressibly wearisome. To this latter torture the younger boy obeyed, and trotted on as he saw the man aiming blows at him. But the elder did not accelerate his pace from the tired march they had been reduced to, and every effort to harass him was useless if intended to cause him to act as his brother did. He was switched, and stinging blows fell unheeded on his limbs; a knife was brandished before his eyes, and

he did not wince; it is doubtful if he ever saw the knife meant to menace him.

It was not so much bravery in the lad that made him callous to all this; the shock of his father's death turned his nerves to iron. While the Indians admired his stoic bearing, the hatred for them almost burst his breast.

But the Indians grew tired of their sport and made preparations for going forward.

"They're taking us from home," wailed little Jacob, clinging to his brother, and thus impeding their movements.

A blow from a brave separated the boys. Then, with hits and thrusts they were driven on. Day came, grew to meridian, declined, and nothing was given the boys to stay the pangs of hunger. Night, and another day, and their mouths were parched, their limbs faint and trembling.

At night Lewis Wetzel crouched upon the hard, bare earth, for they were not allowed a blanket, and folded his brother in his arms, and thus stifled the trembling, caused as much by weakness and even fear as by the cold dews dripping through the trees upon their defenseless heads. The younger boy slept at last, secure in the fold of his boy protector; but Lewis never closed his eyes, but crouched there watching the guard that every now and then threw a glance toward the two youthful captives who rested just beyond the fire, but too far removed from it to feel any of its warmth.

"Courage! courage!" Lewis Wetzel was heard to whisper; but whether the courage was invoked for himself or his brother, that brother who heard did not know.

For two days after their capture the redskins drove the boys along like stolen sheep, waving their murderous weapons over their heads, and yelling in their ears, delighted when they saw a sign of blanching and wavering. They compelled the children to sit close to them while they ate and drank, and offered nothing to the captives. Then from feasting they would arise and drive the boys on, prodding them with sticks if they showed signs of weariness. And so on till they were no longer in sight of the familiar homely clearing, and were sadly exhausted, footsore, tired and hungry. They received kicks and cuffs, for any approach to tardiness, up to the very last, and at every moment they expected death. But such was not to be the case; death was not for them in that guise. The second night after the murder of John Wetzel the Indians sighted the Big Lick, about twenty miles from the river, in what is now Ohio, and upon McMahon's Creek. Here they encamped, the youthfulness of the boys and their utterly spent condition causing them to relax their usual vigilance concerning prisoners.

"White boys hungry?" they asked, holding tempting

morsels of deer's flesh before the famished children's eyes. "White boys' father lost his hair, eh?"

Jacob was crying from hunger and fright; but Lewis paid no attention to physical wants, as he never did thereafter, but stood there white and nerveless.

The Indians made their fire bright after they had eaten their fill, and sat down and smoked and talked far into the night. Then they wrapped themselves in their blankets, and stretched themselves on the ground. The sentinels paced up and down for a little while, scarcely vouching a glance toward the two pale, faint boys clinging to each other outside the ashes of the fire, and hemmed in by the blanketed sleeping warriors, now snoring. Then these watchers would pause once in a while, and glance over toward their somnolent brethren by the warm ashes that dissipated the chilly dews falling through the woods.

Wetzel, to his last day, always remembered how he felt watching the sleeping Indians, many of whom had removed their moccasins and thrust their feet into the ashes, lying there in sensuous ease, while the two forlorn children crouched together on the ground far away from the fire's generous heat, and exhausted, bewildered, wounded. The watchers, from looking at the evidences of the ease they coveted, paced irregularly their rounds. Then they sat upon the ground for a little while. The two got together and spoke a word now and then. The fire grew less, and sunk away into smouldering ashes; the sounds in the midnight wood were conducive to easy slumber.

One of the guards lazily watching the boys saw the bright light in Lewis Wetzel's eyes, and came over to him frowning.

"White boy sleep?" he asked.

He received no reply.

"White boy better go sleep," he said further. Then still seeing the eyes open, he struck the boy in the face as a reminder.

"Now sleep," he said; "a Indian brave cut out the white boy's eyes and make him sleep."

This remedy for insomnia seemed to be understood by the boy, for he did close his eyes, he did to all appearances sleep as his brother was sleeping beside him.

At last the watchers, from sitting on the ground, rolled heavily over, one by one, and slept with the others.

When they had lain there a few minutes, with no signs of awaking, Lewis Wetzel whispered into the ear of his brother:

"Get up; we will go home."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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